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USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

FIXING THE ARMY'S ROLE IN THE DRUG WAR  
FOR THE 1990's

AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

by

Lieutenant Colonel Roy S. Whitcomb  
United States Army

Colonel James M. Kelly  
Project Advisor

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U.S. Army War College  
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013

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## INTRODUCTION

*The international trade in drugs is a major threat to our national security. No threat does more damage to our national values and institutions, and the domestic violence generated by the trade in drugs is all too familiar. Trafficking organizations undermine and weaken and distort national economies with a vast, debilitating black market and large funding requirements for enforcement, criminal justice, prevention and treatment systems. Demand and reduction at home and an aggressive attack on the international drug trade are the main elements in our strategy. They must be pursued together.1*

This quote from The National Security Strategy of the United States emphasizes the scope of the drug threat to our national security; a threat that resulted in a proclamation of a "War on Drugs" for our nation by President Reagan. The purpose of this paper is to analyze the threat of drugs to United States National Security and how the Army can best be used to combat that threat.

In developing the Army role in the "Drug War", the threat, criteria for success, mandate for military action, and the difficulties of controlling a National Drug Strategy are key components forming the basis for the Army's mission. Following discussion of the above topics, we will examine current and recommended Army operations in support of foreign supply and interdiction operations and domestic interdiction and support to United States' agencies in their counterdrug efforts.

The Army's counterdrug role is currently one of support. That role does not need expanding. However, it does require increased formalization and centralized control of resources.

Central to the analysis of Army involvement is the issue of whether the United States is really at or has declared war on

drugs.

Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary defines war as "1a: a state of usually open and declared armed hostile conflict between states and nations...2a: a state of hostility, conflict or antagonism. b: a struggle between opposing forces or for a particular end..."<sup>2</sup> Clausewitz states the object of war is to "(a) impose our will on the enemy, to do which (b) we use the means of maximum available force, with (c) the aim of rendering him powerless...Distress at the brutality of war must not be allowed to inhibit the use of means of war ...to introduce the principle of moderation into the theory of war itself would always lead to logical absurdity."<sup>3</sup> Finally Sun Tzu states, "Never to be taken thoughtlessly or recklessly, war was to be preceded by measures designed to make it easy to win... national unity was deemed to be an essential requirement of victorious war."<sup>4</sup>

Although certain elements of the above definitions and statements on war are true concerning the "Drug War", the United States government nor its people are fighting a war in the generally accepted military sense. The metaphorical "War on Drugs" lacks the necessary commitment of national intent and dedication of resources to achieve a victory.

The use of the term "War on Drugs" has several dangers. First, its focus is placed primarily on an external enemy. This goes to the basics of determining what the problem really is; supply (an external problem) or demand (an internal problem). Thus far, the major United States emphasis has been on curbing the supply.

Second, using the term war, especially with a highly trained and professional Army, raises popular expectations of quick and thorough victory. Given the magnitude of the problem, this is not possible. Third, war is often incorrectly associated with only military objectives rather than as an extension of political objectives. This implies military responsibility for success or failure. Immersing the United States Army in the quagmire of this long protracted struggle could result in a much quicker "Task Force Smith" than we ever imagined and do irreparable damage to the Army's primary warfighting capability.

This is not a criticism but fact. It is important because, as we analyze Army involvement and the cries for an increased role, the criteria for success or victory is usually presented in abstract terms.

### THREAT

There is not a segment of our society that escapes the "scourge of drugs". The drug epidemic threatens National Security socially, economically, and militarily. Few Americans today don't know someone whose life has not been adversely affected by the use of illicit drugs. We are inundated through the media with the drug epidemic and its effects on our society. This section analyzes the threat to people, governments, and countries posed by illicit drugs and associated activities. Perhaps the least acknowledged aspect is the fact that the "illicit drug trade is a consumer driven



business."5

Statistics bear out that business is booming. Drug statistics however, must be subject to careful interpretation:

- An estimated 25 million Americans (about one in ten) used some form of illicit drug in 1989.
- The number of cocaine users alone is estimated to increase at a rate of 10 percent annually.
- It is estimated that half of all Acquired Immunization Disease Syndrome (AIDS) deaths are drug related and intravenous drug use remains a major source of new HIV/AIDS infection.
- The increase of babies born to drug using mothers is showing alarming rise. Frequently, babies are premature, poorly developed, and often addicted to the same drugs their mother's use. Inhibited development and long term medical problems portray greater demands on society to care for these innocent victims.
- Conservative estimates put losses to the United States economy at over \$200 Billion annually to illicit drugs. Drug buys, medical problems, loss of productivity, and work inefficiency all contribute to this tremendous drain on our resources. Coupled with legitimate National, State, and local expenditures to combat the problem, the cost is more staggering.
- 100 percent of the cocaine and heroin and 85 percent of

the marijuana used in the United States is imported.

- Since 1960, a shift in users is evident from predominantly unproductive members of society to an increasing cross section of society. This shift serves to "legitimize" drug use and compound enforcement efforts.<sup>6</sup>

A growing number of "enlightened" critics of United States drug policy argue there is not a major drug problem in the United States. Critics claim statistics purporting 10 percent use are exaggerated and, besides, 90 percent of the population is clean. The \$200 Billion drug bill is inflated and Americans spend much more on other forms of recreation. That changes in our society are inevitable and moral decay is nonsense. These critics fail to assess the cumulative effects of drug use on our country and the tremendous waste of resources it causes.<sup>7</sup>

Domestically, the impact of drugs on our society effects National Security. It contributes to moral decay by increased crime it causes. It degenerates basic values of both the individual and the family and causes substantial loss of money that goes directly to organizations that either overtly or covertly are committed to the overthrow of the United States. Drug links with organized crime and international terrorist groups usurp power from legitimate authority. While motives may differ, undermining legitimate governments, many of which are allies of the United States, is financed by the tremendous profits from the drug trade. The resulting international chaos threatens our nation.

From an international perspective, drug trafficking also does grave damage to democratic institutions in developing countries. Combinations of greed, high revenues, spiraling violence, and lawlessness are a direct challenge to both individual states and international order. Government's cost to suppress the drug trade and redress the dislocations it causes are extraordinary and come at the expense of other vital programs. The human costs are immeasurable.<sup>8</sup>

Given the fragility of emerging democracies, particularly those in Central and South America, the problems of drugs are more destabilizing to those governments than to our own in the short term. Since efforts have been made by our allies to curb drug production and trafficking in their countries, they perhaps recognize the dangers to their freedom and development that comes from the internal decay caused by drugs.

However, these efforts are not without substantial costs that may eventually weaken their resolve to fight. For example, Colombia has taken aggressive steps to combat drug production and flow in that country. Yet, in November 1985, the Palace of Justice in Bogota was seized by members of a Colombian insurgent group, M-19. Over 300 hostages were taken of which 90 were killed, including 12 justices. Records were destroyed of key drug traffickers. This blatant act damaged the government's reputation to protect its own people. In 1986, assassinations continued with the killing of a Supreme Court Justice, the former head of the Special Anti-Narcotics Police, other judges and police, several Colombian

journalists, and private citizens. The Colombian attorney general was assassinated in 1988 as was a Presidential candidate in 1989. But, Colombia continues to vigorously fight the drug cartels.

Similar incidents occur in other countries. In Peru's Upper Huallaga Valley, United States Drug Enforcement Administration agents were greeted by 20 decapitated bodies floating down the river past their new base.<sup>9</sup>

Drug financed terrorism thus forms a powerful base to undermine fledgling countries. They are attacked from within by insurgent elements whose goal is the government's overthrow.

*Drug cartels are inextricably linked to the local populace. Farmers are paid well for growing drug crops. Local police receive a 'take' for keeping quiet about smuggling efforts and even judges have been bribed or coerced...What the United States views as an 'eradication' effort...may be a counterinsurgency for the nation contending with drug traffickers.*<sup>10</sup>

These organizations gain power and make money by selling their services to drug dealers and other thugs. Protection of drug shipments, drug labs, payoffs to government officials, assassinations, all are a part of terrorist activities. Carlos Lehder Riva, a Colombian drug operative arrested and extradited to the United States in February 1987 boasted that, "Coca has been transformed into a revolutionary weapon for the struggle against American imperialism."<sup>11</sup>

This narcoterrorist threat is a growing danger to our National Security. There is a strong link between drug trafficking and international terrorism. The list of insurgent, subversive, and terrorist groups tied to drugs is long and impressive: Colombia's

M-19, Shining Path in Peru, Omega-7, the Irish Republican Army, the Palestine Liberation Organization, Spanish Basque Separatists, Moslem insurgents in the Philippines, the Red Army Brigade, and others. Their ability to finance and expand their operations and purchase sophisticated and plentiful equipment is greatly enhanced by drug money.<sup>12</sup> That relationship will become stronger as the financing for terrorist moves more from collapsing communist states, now striving for legitimacy, to the mega-dollars available from drugs.

Aiding the international drug traffickers, and perhaps the most difficult for the United States to deal with in terms of interdiction, is the vastness of the area to protect. When considering the relatively small size of the 'packages' we are looking for, the borders of the United States are easily penetrated.

The ways drugs cross our borders are almost limitless. "Over 355 million people cross our borders annually. They do this in over 100 million cars and trucks, 635,000 aircraft, and 220,000 boats and ships. Over eight million Sea/Land containers enter the country through our seaports each year."<sup>13</sup> The major entry point for drugs entering the United States today, is along our southwest border with Mexico. Over 1900 miles long, it is isolated and desolate terrain. When adding the Gulf, west and east coasts, and the United States-Canada border, we add nearly 10,000 miles more.

Through over 12,000 miles of borders, 90 tons of cocaine, 30 million pounds of marijuana, and 9,000 pounds of heroin is

estimated by the United States Customs Service to be smuggled annually.<sup>14</sup> When considering the relatively small size, yet tremendous profit margin 500 pounds of heroin brings, for example, it staggers our ability to stem the flow. Less than five percent of incoming cargo can be searched by Customs. With surges of manpower, such as that provided by Army National Guardsmen, occasional peaks of 14 percent can be reached.

The Army has had experience with interdiction efforts. Most recently, the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Southeast Asia was a major pipeline for enemy supplies during the Vietnam War. Despite extraordinary efforts to close it or at least deny the enemy's use, the United States military met with very limited success.

#### CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS

The United States has been aggressively involved in the "War on Drugs" since 1986. However, our ability to define victory or even gauge success has eluded us. Law enforcement agencies are more prone to a "body count" mentality using pure numbers as a measurement; number of arrests, number of seizures, pounds confiscated, number of searches, planes or boats intercepted, money or guns seized, or drug related deaths. Truly accurate data is naturally scarce as drug dealers don't provide their figures.

These statistics are often dangerously deceptive because they are open to different interpretation.

*For example, a decline in drug arrests might support a comparable decline in drug violations; on the other hand, it might also mean that we are failing adequately to enforce the law. Likewise, increased drug seizures might indicate that we are successfully reducing the supply of drugs in the United States, but they might instead be the result of a sharp jump in domestic supply. No single statistic, by itself, can accurately reflect the full complexity of our current drug epidemic.*<sup>15</sup>

In an attempt to measure success, President Bush submitted the first National Drug Control Strategy to Congress in September 1989. Updated three times, the Strategy established National priorities on seven fronts:

- The Criminal Justice System
- Drug Treatment
- Education, Community Action, and the Work Place
- International Initiatives
- Interdiction Efforts
- Drug Research
- Intelligence

The Strategy also attempts to measure effectiveness by a system to quantify both short term (two year) and long term (ten year) objectives. While these measurements are a start, they are vague, subject to differing interpretation, and difficult to translate to the Army for implementation. The nine objectives measure:

- Current overall drug use
- Current adolescent drug use
- Occasional cocaine use
- Frequent cocaine use
- Current adolescent cocaine use

- Drug related medical emergencies
- Drug availability
- Domestic marijuana production
- Student attitudes toward drug use

As an example, the two year objective for Drug Availability is (1) a ten percent reduction in estimated amounts of cocaine, marijuana, heroin, and dangerous drugs entering the United States; and (2) a ten percent reduction in the number of people reporting that the above drugs are easy to obtain in their community. The ten year objective for Drug Availability is a 50 percent reduction in the above two categories.

While these types of statistics may be indicative of general national trends, they are highly subjective and do not provide the clear measurements that defines victory. Such open ended success criteria compounds the problem for the Army as it looks at its increasing role. The question of how we will know when we have won is valid. Yet, it is a question thus far without an answer.

#### MANDATE

Drug problems in the United States go back to the days following the Civil War when the use of morphine for war injuries caused addiction. The modern crisis began in the permissive 1960s as large numbers of our society experimented with marijuana and other forms of illicit drugs. The Department of Justice's Bureau of



Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs was established in 1968 by President Johnson's Reorganization Plan Number 1. President Nixon created a Cabinet Committee to develop a strategy to stop the illegal flow of drugs into the United States. A series of declarations and studies followed. Other major actions included creation of the Drug Enforcement Administration in 1973 and establishment of the El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC) in 1974. EPIC centralizes intelligence collection and provides the most authoritative drug seizure statistics based on its extensive data base and links with Federal, State, and local drug law enforcement agencies.

During the 1960s and 1970s the Army's focus was Vietnam. Drug problems impacted readiness and the Army looked internally to solve it. Aggressive detection, rehabilitation, and elimination programs were started. These programs, though costly, helped lift the Army out of the social sludge. Currently, these established programs serve as a model for success for society and industry.

During the late 1970s and early 1980s, two things occurred. First, the rampant spread of drugs in America became a major Presidential campaign issue and prompted a declaration of a "War on Drugs" by President Reagan following his election. The second was the meteoric rise in defense spending. While focused primarily on improving readiness of our services, others in Congress and the Administration saw the opportunity to claim some of the defense windfall to combat the illegal drug trafficking. The combination of the two set the stage for a more concerted counterdrug effort. During this period, the Army was not interested in a drug mission.

They were enjoying a successful rebuilding of the force. There was also still a formidable threat in the Soviet Union to contend with.

The major restriction to full Army involvement in domestic drug law enforcement is the Posse Comitatus Act. Passed following the Civil War to prevent reconstruction abuses by the Army, Congress modified the Posse Comitatus Act, under the Defense Authorization Act. This modification allowed the military to play a larger role in counterdrug efforts. Public Law 97-86 marked the beginning of Department of Defense involvement in the National civilian counterdrug effort.

While Posse Comitatus limits Army involvement within our own borders, it does not apply to military actions outside the borders of United States territory. Recently, attempts have been made in Congress to change Posse Comitatus to give the military broader authority in domestic civilian drug enforcement. Thus far those attempts have been defeated, and rightly so. The Army is not designed as a law enforcement agency.

**On 8 April, 1986, President Ronald W. Reagan signed National Security Decision Directive (NSDD) 221, a classified document that described the threat to National Security posed by the illicit drug traffic. NSDD 221 also complemented the National Strategy for Prevention of Drug Abuse and Drug Trafficking that President Reagan had declared in 1984. In effect, an 'Operational Order', NSDD 221 charged the highest officers in the administration to pursue drug law enforcement and international cooperation to thwart the drug traffickers, and practically, it further facilitated the use of DOD personnel and resources in drug control measures.16**

The first real test of NSDD 221 came three months later when

the government of Bolivia asked for assistance in combating the growing menace of coca traffickers.

*On 15 July, 1986, six U.S. Army Blackhawk helicopters from the 210th Combat Aviation Battalion, 193d Infantry Brigade (Panama), deployed to Bolivia...Called Task Force Janus, the unit's mission was to provide air transportation, at the direction of representatives of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) contingent stationed with the U.S. Embassy in La Paz, to Bolivian counterdrug police forces as they sought to locate and destroy cocaine production laboratories. The U.S. Ambassador to Bolivia retained overall responsibility for U.S. involvement in the operation.*<sup>17</sup>

The significance of Operation Blast Furnace, aside from it being the first large scale counterdrug operation involving combat forces, was that it met with limited success. That lesson should not be lost as the Nation debates sending its Army into other countries to fight drug thugs. In the short term, as a result of Blast Furnace, illicit drug production in Bolivia was disrupted. Although jungle cocaine labs were discovered, no sizeable amount of cocaine was seized and no major drug figures were arrested. Once Task Force Janus left Bolivia, production returned quickly to near normal level. Blast Furnace proved United States presence was a temporary means of success, but, the operation, though small in scale, was costly. It also raised the broader issue of whether committing United States forces in combat operations in another country, a highly sensitive political issue at home and abroad, is worth it. That issue remains critical today, especially in Latin American countries where the specter of imperialism looms heavy.

In August of 1988, the first four National Guard units were committed to working with United States Customs Service Agents in

inspecting cargo entering the United States. This manpower intense effort still yields limited success. With Guard help in 1989, Customs could now examine 14 percent of containers originating from cocaine source of transit countries, a near threefold increase. Still, over 50 percent of successful interdictions are a result of informants, not chance inspections.

Department of Defense involvement in counterdrug efforts rapidly increased in the late 1980's. The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 89 assigned specific tasks to the military. Congress gave DOD three counterdrug missions:

*to act as the lead federal agency for the detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime drug smuggling into the United States; to integrate into an effective antidrug communications network all the command, control, communications, and technical intelligence assets of the U S Government dedicated to drug interdiction; and to approve and fund each state governor's antidrug plan for enhanced use of the National Guard (in State status) in support of drug interdiction and enforcement operations of drug law enforcement agencies.*<sup>18</sup>

As a result, the Secretary of Defense issued new guidance for a more comprehensive military support role in counternarcotics activities in September 18, 1989. In tasking letters to each unified and specified combatant command Commander-in-Chief, he directed they "elevate the priority of the counternarcotics mission within your command".

The lead combatant command in the counternarcotics battle is Southern Command because of its area of responsibility, Central and South America. Their battle focuses both on supply and interdiction. Forces Command is primarily concerned with the

interdiction aspect, stopping the flow through our borders and assistance to domestic drug law enforcement agencies.

The growing mandate from the President, Congress, and the American people is for the military to "fix" the drug problem. There is increasing frustration that the federal, state, and local governments are seemingly powerless to solve it. Some see the answer as using the Army to reach out and eradicate the foreign drug thugs that are poisoning our country.

Some argue for a lesser military role. Senator Alan Cranston from California commented on the March 1992 Department of Defense decision to seek a lesser role in the "War on Drugs" than that sought by the Office of National Drug Control Policy. "Frankly, I think the Department of Defense should be applauded for its stand..."<sup>19</sup> A Cranston aide said, "There is no light at the end of the tunnel. What is happening is that people are starting to see a bottomless pit."<sup>20</sup>

Whatever the eventual role and changing mandate, it is imperative the Army and the nation not forget that without substantial changes to our laws, the military's primary domestic role in the "Drug War" must remain one of a supporting agency.

#### WHO IS IN CHARGE

Perhaps the single most vexing problem facing the counterdrug effort is who is in charge. Short of the President, no one is in charge. "The quest for an organizational structure that can

efficiently meet the challenge of drug trafficking is not new. In the past 25 years alone, there have been at least 16 attempts to reorganize Federal drug control programs."<sup>21</sup>

37 Federal agencies have a role in the counterdrug effort. Coordinating the efforts of disparate organizations such as the Bureau of Land Management, Internal Revenue Service, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, and others is often left to chance or the personalities of individuals. Further compounding the problem, over 80 Congressional committees and subcommittees have some degree of Congressional oversight of the counterdrug effort. There is, therefore, a tremendous void between the strategy of the President and the tactics of the policeman. Lack of coordination, cohesion, and wasted resources frequently result. The ensuing frustration at all levels is understandable. This lack of direction is not lost on Army personnel struggling with defining the Army's role.

The Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), a position and agency created in 1988, was expected by many to assume the role of "Drug Czar". However, as an advisor to the President, the Director lacks regulatory authority to take charge and issue orders and directives, even in the name of the President. His primary function is writing and coordinating the President's National Drug Control Strategy, not orchestrating the myriad of counterdrug efforts into a cohesive plan.

In the past strong agency heads have been loath to give up authority or relinquish control of their counterdrug programs. As

competition for increasingly fewer resources grows among the many agencies, an interesting phenomena develops. Many of our leaders, while fighting for resources, are attempting to distance themselves from responsibility for failure of the drug war. In their zeal, many see the regimented, success oriented, professional Army as a logical choice to lead the charge.

The Department of Defense, while initially fighting efforts to involve it in the "Drug War", bowed to the inevitable. But, it has declined increasing insistence that it take a greater lead. Most recently, under pressure by the ONDCP, DOD turned aside efforts to increase the military's role.<sup>22</sup> In an era of fighting for our existence to identify an enemy, it appears DOD recognizes that the objectives of the war cannot be met with military power.

The problem of lack of unity of effort is magnified at the State and local level. The many Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (DLEAs) often indulge in a pattern of competition and "turf battles" motivated in part by a budgeting process based on "body counts". Due to lack of central control and coordinated efforts, particularly at the operational level of multi-state or regional cooperation, millions of dollars and untold numbers of man-hours devoted to the counterdrug effort often do not produce substantial results.

It is unlikely that any one person or agency will ever be in charge.

***This does not mean that efficient operational and tactical activities cannot be accomplished. It means only that they must be done through efforts of a coalition. The 'headquarters' or lead agency must be supported by***

*diverse groups with a common interest.*<sup>23</sup>

The next section deals with the Army's present and future role in supporting those coalitions.

#### PRESENT

The proliferation of drugs in America is a great example of the free enterprise system. There is a substantial demand for the substantial supply available. The National counterdrug strategy seeks to attack drug proliferation in three ways. First, stop the supply of drugs by destroying production at the source. Two, interdict shipments either in the source country or as the drugs make their way to the United States. The third is demand reduction. No matter how successful, cocaine lab destruction, crop eradication, and interdiction operations are, they alone will not end America's drug problems.

Each leg of the above strategy is distinct. Yet they are uniquely interwoven and must be attacked in a coordinated manner simultaneously. While Army efforts are focused primarily on supply destruction and interdiction, demand reduction lessons learned from the Army's highly successful detection, rehabilitation, and education programs are certainly worthy of study and emulation by society and industry.

In its support role, the Army directs its efforts in three



ways; nation building through foreign civil-military operations, security assistance to foreign nations, and counterdrug assistance to Federal, State, and domestic agencies.

#### CIVIL MILITARY OPERATIONS

Civil Military Operations (CMO) are the most effective long term Army counterdrug effort because they strengthen the host nation, its government, and its people by helping develop a strong and survivable infrastructure. The major drawback is it is the most drawn out strategy and often circumvents the direct attack of drug production and trafficking. Civil military operations encompass civic action programs providing for the needs of the population of drug producing nations. They can provide local security, isolation of drug producers from the populace, and help drug producing alternatives such as crop substitution programs. Psychological operations can also help invigorate the host nation government by providing accurate information to the populace.

While not every nation is receptive to CMOs, there are successes. Long standing operations in Southern Command have been directed at bolstering emerging Central and South American governments. Efforts by Task Force-Bravo in Honduras focused primarily on projects such as airfield, road and bridge construction, medical aid to the people, and limited construction in towns and villages. Army engineers, Special Forces Teams, transportation units, and medical personnel continue to be instrumental in providing long term assistance. While military

projects were the initial focus, emphasis has shifted more to humanitarian aid. The results have been greater government stability, self reliance, a more capable military, and an improved national infrastructure that seeks to support the population.<sup>24</sup>

The danger facing the life of programs such as Task Force Bravo is Congress tying assistance to target-nation success against illicit drugs. Aid is often directly allocated based on "body count" statistics in counterdrug operations. Simply using numbers for measurement of success in developing countries where the United States often does not fully appreciate the complexities of their unique problems is often counterproductive. Specifying where aid goes may drive some nation's cooperation away from our shared best interest. Arguably, recent actions in Peru in which the United States stipulated where aid is used and the Peruvian Government declined the aid, may have driven the population further from the government. The result was the loss of money needed to not only combat the drug issue, but, to help with other critical projects in Peru.<sup>25</sup>

It is logical that the United States wants to get a good return on its investment in foreign aid, despite the fact it frequently appears no forethought is given to where aid dollars go. However, it is imperative that careful coordination and consultation with the Country Team and host nation government target those funds to mutually agreed upon programs that benefit the interest of both.

Administration and Congressional resolve in dealing with

governments of drug producing nations must be balanced with the real need to support and provide continuity to long term payoff foreign assistance programs.<sup>26</sup>

#### OPERATIONAL SUPPORT

Security assistance programs funnel support in several ways to the target nation. In many instances, these programs already exist and it is relatively easy to add or adjust the counterdrug elements. A key component in security assistance programs is that there must be a system established to work with the host nation. That system must ensure host nation commitment to cooperate in areas of our mutual best interest. That commitment must also be legally and politically acceptable not only to the host government, but also to a majority of the population. Just as our military is prohibited from participating in certain domestic civil law enforcement actions, many of our allies face similar restrictions. Country teams must ensure no violations of host nation laws occur with U.S. security assistance programs.

Foreign Military Sales provide nations with either older model or state of the art equipment. This equipment may be designated for counterdrug use by modification or design. Unfortunately, the more sophisticated the equipment, the greater the investment in training and required support packages. Army helicopters, for example, provide tremendous utility in counterdrug efforts. However, many nations are not able to provide the necessary support for long term operation. The Country Team must consider these ramifications as

they tailor their recommendations for aid.

International Military Education and Training (IMET) assists nations in developing more professional military organizations. A majority of this training is conducted in the United States with countries sending personnel to established courses, such as flight school or Ranger school. IMET offers the advantage of high quality training but is a long term undertaking because of the language requirement for instruction.

Special Forces Teams are trained to work in place with indigenous forces. Training in reconnaissance, command and control, planning, logistics, medical support, combat raids, patrolling, and civic action programs are a few of the skills taught. Coupled with DEA personnel dealing with drug specific training, formidable expertise in counterdrug operations is available for target nation forces. The key in training success is longevity. Conscript soldiers often receive excellent instruction. However, many leave and take the training with them, in some cases selling their knowledge to the very forces the government is trying to defeat. United States Army forces can slow the process by its commitment to the indigenous force in helping raise the standards of the host nation army.

The major benefit of properly tailored security assistance programs is they strengthen both counterdrug and counterinsurgency military forces and the government. Additionally, these teams need not be encumbered with undue bureaucratic anchors. In Southern Command, for example, only about 500 Americans are in the field

assisting in counterdrug training and intelligence missions.<sup>27</sup> While 500 Americans has proven inadequate for the job, a creditable force is possible without major deployments. For the dollar spent and the results achieved, Security Assistance programs are low cost and high payoff operations for which the Army is ideally suited.

Another area of Operational Support is intelligence. Providing intelligence data is a relatively simple way of the Army assisting target nation counterdrug efforts. Lack of high technology, radar, electronic surveillance devices, and high altitude photographic and imagery capabilities within Central and South American countries hampers their ability to detect and track drug traffickers. United States assistance provides the technology. Army tactical intelligence teams work with DEA, CIA, and host nation forces to assemble dossiers on trafficking organizations and drug leaders. Special Operating Forces have worked with military and police forces in a myriad of areas and the Army's counterterrorist unit provided specialized training. The Army is experienced in this type of training and human intelligence operations and analysis. Special Forces Groups, organized for these missions, are recognized as among the best in the world.

Passing intelligence and specialized training to foreign nations is not without problems. Sharing intelligence data can compromise capabilities and sources. Corrupt government, military, and local officials often share information on counterdrug intelligence with drug thugs. Those skills and techniques are then used to counter friendly operations.

Some countries are also increasingly reluctant to allow intrusive U.S. surveillance equipment to be placed on their soil. Finally, "intelligence surges" alone may prove marginal at stopping the production and flow because drug operations are so wide spread, increasingly mobile, and recover quickly when detected.

With growing unrest in the international anti-drug coalition, continued counterdrug security assistance may prove more difficult in the long run. Foreign resistance to greater militarization of the "Drug War" on their turf and increasing internal problems within their own countries are causing "cracks" in the drug war alliance. Moreover, United States assistance is frequently seen as creeping American imperialism and interference. Further, some foreign governments view illicit drugs as mainly a United States problem caused by decadent lifestyles and runaway affluence.

Despite the difficulties, Army Security Assistance coupled with Civil Military Operations provides a complete package to host nation forces. The key factors are long term commitment, a realistic assessment of what is needed and where, and host nation resolution to succeed.

#### ASSISTANCE TO DOMESTIC AGENCIES

The Army's role in providing assistance to Federal, State, and local agencies in counterdrug operations is viable, visible, and potentially the most productive effort for the near and long term. While Constitutional restrictions under Title 10, United States Code provisions prohibit major involvement by active duty and

reserve forces within our borders, the National Guard, under Title 32 provisions is not as limited by statutory restraints. The National Guard has the personnel and equipment to support counterdrug efforts. More importantly, the Guard is familiar with the role of supporting civilian State agencies and operating within the confines of State law enforcement jurisdictions.

Funding for National Guard counterdrug support is provided by the Department of Defense. The controlling link is the submission, by the Guard, of their proposed plan for support of State counterdrug operations. The proposal flows through their State headquarters to the National Guard Bureau where it is processed prior to being sent to the Office of the Secretary of Defense for final approval. Proposals are reviewed for legality and practicality.<sup>28</sup> If approved, the proposal is sent to the appropriate service for support. United States Forces Command implements Army supported National Guard operations. Continental United States Army and Forces Command assistance and review on the front end of proposal submission, while not required, does help ensure adequate training of the force and limits duplication of effort in overlapping areas. This is becoming an area for greater Army involvement. It speeds the process and helps make the active force a key player up front.

Reluctance by the Army to become involved in counterdrug support has often centered on the perceived degradation of mission readiness and training. That myth has proven unfounded if proper training principles and creative scenarios are used.

For example, Army Aviation gives a capability to DLEAs that is most significant. The UH60A Blackhawk is well suited for the drug interdiction mission with its sophisticated night flying capability, maneuverability, and speed. It can easily shadow many small commercial airplanes flying low level to unimproved airfields. Other Army Aviation aircraft are used for search and detection missions to locate illicit crops in rural or wilderness areas. Side Looking Airborne Radar (SLAR) helps spot and track targets on air, land, and sea routes. Counterdrug air missions enhance crew skills in a tough environment that taxes men and equipment while providing a unique capability unavailable to most police forces.

Special Forces units from the Florida National Guard conducted a joint exercise with the state DLEAs. Strategic reconnaissance teams targeted airfields known to be used by smugglers. Intelligence data was collected by night vision devices and cameras and passed to DLEAs for action.

A recent mission of an Army Engineer tunnel detection team in Arizona uncovered a sophisticated tunnel from Mexico to a house in the United States. The tunnel was used for transporting substantial quantities of drugs under the border.<sup>29</sup>

The Army's Intelligence Center and School at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, is ideally located to assist in counterdrug operations while conducting realistic training exercises for its soldier/students. Using ground surveillance radar and ground sensor systems, students are placed in a challenging training environment



along the United States-Mexico border. Tactical insertion techniques and use of camouflaged positions, provides stressful training. Conducted largely at night on known drug trafficking routes, these operations provide usable intelligence. Time sensitive information is passed to the Border Patrol or DLEAs for immediate evaluation and appropriate action.

Specialized training in a variety of military subjects is also available to law enforcement officers. Active, Reserve, and National Guard forces and facilities offer many of the same training benefits. Security Assistance programs give foreign nations.

For example, the Army's Military Police school offers instruction to law enforcement agencies through Mobile Training Teams. Much of the instruction offered is at low or no cost to the user and because it is mobile, can reach a wider audience. Most instructors possess excellent credentials and many have international experience with other military and police agencies.

Another area of growing military support is providing loan and lease equipment (without operators), use of facilities (buildings, training areas, ranges), and the transfer of excess government equipment to other Federal agencies. The Department of Defense operates four Regional Logistical Support Offices nation wide that coordinates requests from DLEAs. The only major stipulation is the equipment or facilities must be used to support counterdrug efforts. Material available is not limited to military equipment. A small sample of the diversity of equipment follows:

Answering machines

Automobiles

Binoculars

Battery chargers

Fax machines

Body armor

Tool boxes

Generators

Kevlar helmets

Lithium batteries

Antennas

Ground surveillance radars30

Some equipment is on loan and some may be given to requesting agencies. Currently, civilian DLEAs must reimburse the government for use. For smaller local law enforcement agencies, even with reimbursing, this program is a panacea. It is also a major contributor to multi-State coordinated efforts such as Operation Alliance and Project North Star, which will be discussed later.

A recent multi-State request to DOD for assistance in establishing a regional counterdrug cooperative was submitted under Title 10, Section 1004 (Additional Support for Counterdrug Activities of the FY91 National Defense Authorization Act). Section 1004 essentially provides a very liberal interpretation of what DOD can fund for State DLEA efforts. In this case, support requested included:

- DOD establish a regional counterdrug training facility at an existing site to be converted and maintained by DOD. DOD contract for instructors, fund all costs for guest lecturers, and supply specialized training equipment and support
- Provide communications, command, control, and computer network for hardware and support, software, office space,

and secure communications

- Aviation fuel
- Radars, both air and ground
- One helicopter with full support package<sup>31</sup>

The estimated cost for this support was \$15 million per year. While no decision has been made on what, if any, support DOD would give, the request does demonstrate the aggressive measures taken by State and local governments to solicit DOD help.

The final area of support to local agencies is in terms of manpower. Use of National Guard forces in State status varies with the nature of the perceived threat of their drug problem. The largest number of Guard personnel are currently used to augment United States Customs agents in searching incoming parcels, containers, aircraft, autos, and cargo. The use of Army Working Dog Teams augments DLEAs and often fills a void in local capabilities. Intelligence analyst can assist in screening and organizing police reports, searching for links and trends in drug apprehensions. While prohibited from collecting on United States citizens and organizations, collating information is within legal parameters of the National Guard under Title 32 authority. The return on these efforts can lead to established networks of intelligence sharing that has previously been lost due to personnel shortages. Use of National Guard soldiers in Illinois for counterdrug work netted an estimated \$1.7 Billion in illicit drugs in 1991. The Guard spent an estimated \$1.4 Million to fund this program.<sup>32</sup>

As stated earlier in this paper, the major problem with the

counterdrug effort has been the lack of a coordinating agency at the national level. Recognizing this problem, several attempts have been made to formally organize regional coalitions that have National as well as international dealings. Two organizations currently in existence are Operation Alliance, established in 1986 in El Paso, Texas covering the United States-Mexico border and Project North Star, established in 1990 in Buffalo, New York to cover our northern border with Canada.

The concept of coordinated cooperative border interdiction efforts was put forth by the Office of National Drug Control Policy in the President's National Drug Control Strategy. Both Alliance and North Star are not command headquarters. Their charter is to serve as multi-agency coordination centers providing an orderly method for law enforcement agencies to voluntarily coordinate their efforts. The result is expansion and enhancement of multi-agency operations that seek to avoid unwarranted duplication and accidental interference between independent operations. Representation by local, State, and Federal agencies and Canadian and Mexican law enforcement officials seeks to improve border wide and regional interaction, strategy, intelligence, training, and planning. Additionally, collectively addressing problems leads to more effectively employed assets. Army interface with both organizations has improved capabilities, lowered response time for requests, and provided a central point of contact for Department of the Army actions.

Joint Task Force-6 (JTF-6) was established in 1989 at Fort

Bliss, Texas, by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It is the DOD coordinating support arm for Operation Alliance. It is an active military joint headquarters but has no DOD combat forces assigned. It processes requests from Operation Alliance through Forces Command to the Joint Staff. When support is approved, JTF-6 tactically controls allocated units. If Guard forces are involved, the State maintains control and JTF-6 tasks the forces to support the Alliance designated lead DLEA. JTF-6 has conducted and coordinated numerous operations, some as large as battalion size training exercises in the vicinity of known drug smuggling routes from Mexico. While providing expanded training opportunities for the forces involved, operations such as this also saturate "hot spots" and serve notice that drug smuggling is not always a safe occupation.

Most recently United States Forces Command expanded the role of the continental Army Commands in counterdrug coordination. An outstanding example is that of First United States Army, headquartered at Fort Meade, Maryland. Their counterdrug mission is to act as the regional centralized agency for Army and other military support to DLEAs. First Army established and maintains an aggressive program to advertise their charter, yet leaves initiation of requests at the proper level, with the user. Their stated philosophy is that law enforcement agencies are the supported commander-in-chief for counterdrug operations. This program is perhaps the best way the Army can help nationally in the counterdrug effort. Given the mission, they can tailor the force,

allocate and distribute assets, and coordinate diverse requests while helping insure maximum training objectives are met for the supporting force.<sup>33</sup>

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The United States is currently involved in a growing struggle, the likes of which threatens and challenges its future. The metaphorical "War on Drugs" possesses many characteristics of previous conflicts; terrorism, insurgency and counterinsurgency, fledgling governments, corruption, incompetence, proliferation of technology in weapons and organization, growing international concern, lack of a unified strategy, and untested doctrine. In military terms, both sides share the same center of gravity for victory. "The center of gravity for the United States is the population's resistance to drugs [demand reduction]; the center of gravity for narcoterrorist is the drug market within the U.S. population."<sup>34</sup> This is the dilemma the Army faces. It cannot attack the true center of gravity, our population, with the full force of its resources. However, the Army is expected to and must exercise a greater and more organized role in the "Drug War".

Some in our country advocate a greater external Army role against drug producing nations. The Army is the only organization strong enough and with sufficient resources to counter large armed narcoterrorist organizations. Such missions could be tactically planned and executed. Leaving such operations strictly to host

nation forces who are not as well trained often results in waste and failure.

However, the possibility of conducting counterdrug combat operations in foreign countries on a large enough scale to be successful is remote. No government wants us on their soil, especially for a problem perceived as primarily American. In all probability, such operations would embroil the United States in long term internal chaos and destabilize the target nation. Additionally, our limited successes, thus far, have proven to be short lived. In Operation Blast Furnace, the departure of U.S. forces saw production quickly return to preoperation levels. The faces and places might be different, but the profit margin is too attractive to permanently discourage producers and traffickers.

The American people must recognize the drug problem is not being foisted on us by a coca farmer in Peru. It is primarily an American problem and until we become serious about reducing demand in the United States, temporarily interdicting supply is futile and of little long term value.

The Army's role in the drug war is currently on track with where it should be, one of support. We must continue to improve our foreign programs and focus a majority of our external efforts on nation building and security assistance. We must base our Country Team resources for the log haul working to help build and stabilize foreign governments.

The Army cannot allow itself to be forced into counterdrug missions which will impact on readiness to maintain our highly

touted warfighting capabilities. Recognizing counterdrug operations as a piece of our broader overall mission, the Army must keep its participation and allocation of resources and personnel in perspective.

While the Army must continue to aggressively assist interdicting the drug flow through our borders, great care must be taken before Congress changes existing Posse Comitatus laws. Assigning the Army a greater role in strict law enforcement matters is an expedient with far reaching ramifications for our society.

Domestically, our most productive efforts will be continued formalization of the roles of the various Army Commands. With four continental Army commands and JTF-6, Army headquarters and staffs are in place throughout our country to assist. Forces Command should be the executive agency for execution. These headquarters can also assist local and State authorities to develop campaign plans to combat the drug war in their regions. A National Drug Strategy exists, "...yet by definition, strategies lack the specific coordinating guidance by which subordinates must operate."<sup>35</sup> The expertise we possess in planning, can certainly help fill the void in developing the ends, ways, and means in logical phased regional counterdrug operations.

Research and development cooperation is possible between the Army and civilian agencies. While not always feasible, there may be growing compatibility of equipment as we share it. Law enforcement may also provide an additional test bed for new systems. As research and development budgets shrink, equipment produced for



police and Army use may prove a viable means of satisfying both requirements. Reducing costs on parts as demand histories increase is also a possibility.

With increased apprehensions of drug offenders, local, State and Federal facilities are rapidly becoming overtaxed. An alternative may be to use Army facilities as retention or rehabilitation centers. A critical shortage of space in jails, prisons, and rehabilitation facilities could be alleviated to some degree by using outdated or nonessential bases to house non-violent first time offenders. Some States have already tested military type basic training, hoping to instill many of the basic skills and values soldiers already have. Using such bases, much like Civilian Conservation Corps camps in the post-depression era could serve to unclog the prison system and provide labor for repair of our decaying infrastructure. A dedicated workforce to clean streets, perform manual labor, or other public service while receiving education and rehabilitation counseling in a less threatening environment would benefit both society and the individual. Army bases, many destined for closure, already exist and are suitable for low security housing. Law enforcement and social service personnel augmented by National Guard soldiers could man the facility providing ver basic life support.

There is a growing recognition that the "War on Drugs" may be just as long and costly as the Cold War. The United States government nor her people are as yet prepared to declare total war. As our nation continues to search for a formula for success, cries

for a greater military role will continue. As Army involvement grows, we should contribute all we, as soldiers, reasonably can. Perhaps our greatest contribution will be the attitude of success, the determination, the discipline, and the constant reminder for our nations leaders that ours is a supporting role.



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